

STATE OF CONNECTICUT



AUDITORS OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

STATE CAPITOL

210 CAPITOL AVENUE

HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1559

JOHN C. GERAGOSIAN

ROBERT M. WARD

**Testimony of the Auditors of Public Accounts
Appropriations Committee
March 1, 2011**

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Walker, Senator Kane, Representative Miner and members of the Appropriations Committee. We are pleased to voice our support for the Auditors of Public Accounts budget as presented to the Governor and pledge to work with you and the legislative leaders to achieve the lapses set forth in the Governor's proposed budget.

The office of Auditor of Public Accounts has broad and important powers and duties:

- Auditing the books and accounts of each officer, department, commission, board and court in state government, including quasi-public agencies;
- Performing the Statewide Single Audit of Federal Programs in accordance with the Federal Single Audit Act to account for every single dollar of federal funds the state receives;
- Determining whether the State's resources are properly safeguarded and prudently used;
- Determining whether audited agencies are in compliance with all legal requirements;
- Evaluating a program's results, including consideration of costs and benefits;
- Investigating whistle blower matters.

The Auditors Office has always been able to live within our budgetary means and has traditionally been able to return a significant portion of our budget to the state's coffers. However, the constant pressure to hold the line on our budget is causing our office to lose ground in a few important areas and is threatening our core mission.

Each year, it's becoming more and more difficult to fulfill our statutory responsibility to audit every state agency every two years.

The current structure of the state's whistleblower law, which limits discretion by our office, has created a backlog of cases and has put undue pressure on our budget and our ability to concentrate on our primary statutory responsibilities.

Furthermore, our office previously conducted performance audits to determine if programs, systems and agencies are actually achieving their intended results. The new administration's desire to restructure state government and the legislature's desire to use results-based accountability for budgeting and programmatic evaluations lend themselves well to resuming performance auditing. However, we've been unable to conduct these studies because of a limitation of our resources.

We've undertaken a few strategies to relieve the pressure on our resources and help us do more with the same, or less.

First, we would like to join other states that are taking advantage of technology for greater efficiency and lowering costs. The Auditor's Office, like other state agencies, is going through a transition of the degree of technology we use. The Office is currently using video training, webinars, and other means of technology to help our auditors better complete the 80 hours of continuing education required of them during each two-year period. Those changes have saved the office thousands of dollars of travel and productivity costs. We'd like to continue to build on that process by taking advantage of systems to help us do our job better with less cost to the taxpayers.

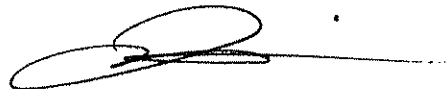
We've also taken concrete steps to reduce the pressure of whistleblower complaints on our already limited resources. We've begun a continuing dialogue with the Attorney General's office on how to jointly administer Connecticut's whistleblower law in the most effective and efficient manner possible. Our two offices are working together in an effort to jointly support legislation for consideration by the 2011 General Assembly which will give each of our offices the authority and discretion to better resolve these cases.

Lastly, we want to point out that our office brings back approximately \$2 million of federal reimbursements to the state in return for our audit work on all of the federal funds received by the state.

Thank you for all of your support and we pledge to continue working with you during these difficult fiscal times.



Robert M. Ward
Auditor of Public Accounts



John C. Geragosian
Auditor of Public Accounts